

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22 are pending herein. Claim 1 has been amended as supported by Fig. 1 of the present application, for example. New independent claim 15 includes the subject matter of original claims 1 and 2. New independent claim 21 includes the subject matter of original claims 1 and 7. New independent claim 22 includes the subject matter of original claims 1, 9 and 11. New claims 16-20 correspond to original claims 4, 8, 10, 12 and 14, and depend from new independent claim 15.

1. Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 were rejected under §102(b) over Takeuchi, and claims 9 and 13 were rejected under §103(a) over Takeuchi. To the extent that this rejection may be applied against the amended claims, it is respectfully traversed.

As currently amended, claim 1 recites, among other things, a piezoelectric/electrostrictive device comprising a substrate including a support portion constituted of a thick member and two arm portions constituted of thin-plate members extended from the support portion. The support portion has first regions adjacent each of the arm portions and a second region spaced inwardly from the first regions. A plurality of grooves are formed in at least a surface positioned on an extending-direction side of the at least one arm portion in the second region of the support portion.

Takeuchi discloses, in Figs. 1-7, recesses 14a and 14b formed along a longitudinal direction of the thin plate sections 12a and 12b. Applicants respectfully submit that the locations of these recesses are in the first regions adjacent each of the arm portions, as the phrase "first regions" is defined in amended claim 1. However, the claimed "second region" in Takeuchi, while being spaced inwardly from the first

regions 14a, 14b, is planar. Therefore, Takeuchi fails to disclose a piezoelectric/electrostrictive device, wherein a plurality of grooves are formed in at least a surface position on an extending-direction side of the at least one arm portion *in the second region* of the support portion, as recited in claim 1. Since claims 3, 5, 6, 9 and 13 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1, those claims are also believed to be allowable over the applied art. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

2. Applicants appreciate the Examiner indicating that claims 2, 4, 7, 8, 10-12 and 14 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. As explained above, new independent claim 15 includes the subject matter of claim 2 rewritten in independent form. New dependent claims 16-20 correspond to claims 4, 8, 10, 12 and 14, respectively and depend either directly or indirectly from claim 15. New claim 21 includes the subject matter of claim 7 rewritten in independent form. New claim 22 includes the subject matter of claim 11 rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, claims 15-22 should also be indicated as allowable.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims herein are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for this application in due course.

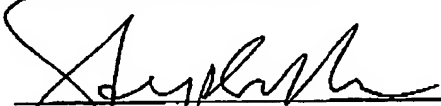
If the Examiner believes that contact with Applicants' attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, the Examiner is herein requested to call Applicants' attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

October 4, 2005

Date

Respectfully submitted,


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